Twitter Thread by Nyx



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Ashtangha Yoga or the eight limbs of Yoga-

Many people think Yoga is just an Indian physical exercise but that's wrong. Yoga is a way to connect with the Supreme in Hinduism and attain Moksha(liberation).
The proper yoga as described in Hindu scriptures consists of 8 limbs:

1) Yamas- They are the 5 ethical rules of Hinduism. The 5 Yamas are:
i) Ahimsa: Nonviolence (this also includes not eating meat)
ii) Satya: truthfulness
iii) Asteya: non-stealing
iv) Brahmacharya: chastity, sexual restraint
v) Aparigraha: non-avarice, non-possessiveness

2) Niyamas- They are the 5 "do's". The five Niyamas are:
i) Shaucha: purity of mind, speech and body
ii) Santosha: contentment
iii) Tapas: austerity, self-discipline
iv) Svadhyaya: study of Vedas(Holy books of Hindus)
v) Ishvarapranidhana: contemplation of the Ishvara (God)

3) Aasana or the physical yoga-
Asana is a posture that one can hold for a period of time, staying relaxed, steady, comfortable and motionless. The aasana postures are believed to have been given by Mahadeva (Hindu God) himself. Hatha Yoga Pradipika mentions 84 aasanas.

4) pr■■■y■ma- After a desired aasana has been achieved, Yoga sutra recommend pr■■■y■ma, the practice of consciously regulating the breath. This is usually done by inhaling and exhaling breathe for a period of time.

5) Pratyahara- Pratyahara is drawing within one's awareness. Pratyahara empowers one to stop being controlled by the external world, fetch one's attention to seek self-knowledge and experience the freedom innate in one's inner world.

6) Dharana- Dharana means concentration. The mind is fixed on a mantra(sacred chantings in Hinduism), or one's breath/navel/tip of tongue/any place, or an object one wants to observe, or a concept/idea in one's mind.

7) Dhyana or meditation- Dhyana is contemplating, reflecting on whatever Dharana has focused on. Dharana is a state of mind, Dhyana the process of mind. Dhyana is distinct from Dharana in that the meditator becomes actively engaged with its focus.

8) Samadhi- Samadhi is oneness with the subject of dhyana. Samadhi is that spiritual state when one's mind is so absorbed in whatever it is contemplating on, that the mind loses the sense of its own identity. The thinker, the thought process and the thought fuses with the subject

This also proves that yoga is integral to Hinduism. Yoga is not some physical stretching or exercise. When you're practicing yoga you're practicing a part of Hinduism and if you can't digest that fact then don't do yoga. If you want to exercise then go to gym not yoga classes.

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